

Message Text

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ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 L-03 OES-07 FEA-01
ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EPG-02
DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-01 INT-05 NSAE-00 NSC-05
OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00
ACDA-07 PRS-01 PA-01 DLOS-09 /123 R

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NEA/AFN - MR. WILKINSON
-----050844Z 010663 /22

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS
INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 101533

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, PBOR, IT, LY,TS

SUBJECT: LIBYA-TUNISIA MARITIME BOUNDARY: SCARABEO III
DRILLING SITE

REF: TUNIS 2877

1. IN REFTEL SCARABEO III'S "GOOD DISCOVERY" REPORTED
MADE AT 33 DEGREES 55.7 MINUTES NORTH, 12 DEGREES 35
MINUTES EAST. DRILLING SITE APPROXIMATELY 5.4 NAUTICAL
MILES SOUTH OF SCARABEO IV. SCARABEO III SITUATED ON
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LIBYAN SIDE OF AN EQUIDISTANT LINE USING LOW TIDE ELEVA-
TIONS CONSTRUCTED BY DEPARTMENT GEOGRAPHER FOR ILLUSTRATIVE
PURPOSE. USING "NATURAL PROLONGATION" ARGUMENT, ON OTHER
HAND, TUNISIA COULD ARGUE THAT SCARABEO III FALLS ON ITS
SIDE OF POTENTIAL MARITIME BOUNDARY LINE.

2. "NATURAL PROLONGATION" CITED BY ICJ IN NORTH SEA

CONTINENTAL SHELF CASES AS ONE OF A VARIETY OF APPROPRIATE CRITERIA TO BE USED IN SHELF BOUNDARY DELIMITATIONS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PLOT PRECISELY THE "NATURAL PROLONGATION" OF A COUNTRY WITHOUT DETAILED GEOLOGIC AND HYDROGRAPHIC DATA AND THE LEGAL RELEVANCE OF SCIENTIFIC DATA TO LEGAL CONCEPT OF "NATURAL PROLONGATION" IS OBSCURE. GEOGRAPHER'S OFFICE CURRENTLY PREPARING STUDY ON LIBYA-TUNISIA MARITIME

BOUNDARY DISPUTE WHICH IS DUE SHORTLY. FURTHER WILL BE SAID ON "NATURAL PROLONGATION" CONCEPT IN THIS STUDY. MAPS SHOWING CONFLICTING OIL CONCESSIONS AND HYPOTHETICAL BOUNDARY LINES INCLUDING ONE POSSIBLE "NATURAL PROLONGATION" WILL BE ATTACHED TO STUDY.

3. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT DOES NOT MAKE JUDGMENT ON MERITS OF THIS BOUNDARY DISPUTE BECAUSE OF COMPLEXITY OF FACTORS INVOLVED AND BECAUSE OF OUR FIRM VIEW THAT SUCH DISPUTES ARE FOR THE PARTIES THEMSELVES TO RESOLVE THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS SUCH AS NEGOTIATION OR ARBITRATION.

4. EMBASSY AGAIN REQUESTED TO OBTAIN ITALO-TUNISIAN BOUNDARY COORDINATES FOR AID IN DEPARTMENTAL ASSESSMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Sent Date: 04-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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